

they'll name a city after us

by Gray Doll

Her mother always told her, "Be home before dark, and do not talk to strangers." But in the end, he simply snatched her up and carried her away before she had the chance to talk. — Greek mythology AU, Klaus/Caroline

Rated: Fiction T - English - Romance/Tragedy - Caroline F., Klaus - Words: 2,986 - Reviews: 13 - Favs: 29 - Follows: 17 - Published: 3/20/2014 - Status: Complete - id: 10202758

URL: <https://www.fanfiction.net/s/10202758>

they'll name a city after us

Notes: First Vampire Diaries fic! This is AU, obviously, based on the Greek myth of Hades and Persephone, because I have always thought their story would work beautifully with Klaus and Caroline. If you are not familiar with the myth, I strongly recommend looking it up. It's one of the best.

they'll name a city after us

There was once this girl.

She had the bright blue eyes and pale corn silk hair of a child, though she was no longer a child. She was the daughter of a powerful woman, who loved her more than the sun or the sea or the earth itself. Many people loved her, and not simply for her beauty, but they loved the way she smelled like ocean water and summer roses and vanilla beans. The way she spoke so sweetly yet so sure, the way she wore gossamer white dresses and ran through the woods barefoot.

Her mother always told her, "Be home before dark, and do not talk to strangers."

She always laughed it off, and she did it that day, too. She was only going to play in the valley near their house; because she liked to dance among the wildflowers, she liked to watch the sun set slowly behind the copses of trees, she liked the way the red light made everything look like it was on fire.

She had promised her mother once, that she would never, ever talk to strangers.

But in the end, she didn't even get the chance to talk to him, because he snatched her up before she could open her mouth to speak. No, she never spoke to the man with the ocean-storm eyes and sun gold hair. She didn't have to. He stole her, simple and easy, pinned her like a flower, like a butterfly, in his arms.

How lithe, yet how impossibly strong he appeared. Even when she tried to scream and thrash and kick and claw at him with her chewed, babyish fingernails, he didn't flinch. He opened up the ground beneath them, taking her to a place the living rarely entered, a place there was no sunshine.

A place that was black and gray and red, and her bed was rough and cold against her skin and he told her he would wreck the world to keep her – and there was a trickle of dried blood, crimson turning an awful shade of rust, sticking the sheets to her thigh.

Her name was Caroline, and all of this is true.

I.

Everything that now surrounds Caroline is made from smoke and marble and lead. An entire kingdom wrought from screaming iron. Every shiny glass surface gone gray and foggy with the faces of lost souls.

She sees the stray ones sometimes, the escaped souls, the half-formed clayish figures that never got to abandon mortality and skitter about in the corner of her eyesight. When she tries to catch them they float away from her, retreating into the shadow play. And they whisper, low and high at the same time, in voices that are too full of white-hot noise for Caroline to understand.

Klaus does that to her, as well. His foreign, ancient presence makes her feel weak and rabbit hearted. It gives her feelings aching like pins and needles into her skin, like carbonated bubbly ripples that make her feel too light-headed like she's translucent, like she's going to float and get lost in the dark lines of the ceiling.

The kingdom is covered in ivy, sharp and winding as barbed wire. It crawls out from the cracks of the marble floors, like dark hell flowers. They reach out like ravenous arms, tearing and grasping at her ankles. Like some sort of a botanical vampire, a twisted green mockery of her captor.

(So what, just one more thing that wants to drain her blood.)

She has no choice but to wear her gifted crown of thorny stars, gold and glass-blue like his eyes. She thinks that no winter has ever felt as long as this one – every single night is filled with endless hours of their pallid faces, hers and his, staring at one another from across a soulless dining table.

She decides to hide behind her own glassy eyes, her now pale cheeks, her now limp hair. She gives dry, clipped answers to the questions that he intends to fill the cold space with.

'Do you-'

'No.'

'Have you-'

'No.'

She keeps her voice low, dispassionate, like he's not even there, like he doesn't matter – perhaps that will dishearten him. She hides in a room of dark gray and red velvet he has made just for her, scribbling letters to her mother and her friends that she will never send. She crumbles the paper in her hands.

She wishes someone from up above could reach down, call out to her and describe to her the color of the sun as it sets behind the trees, as she can no longer recall it herself.

II.

She cannot find freedom even in dreams.

Because when she sleeps, it is nightmares of coal black horses and earth splitting in two. The horses trod over her and splinter her weak bones, one by one – she can feel it all, every last bone clattering loud against her pulse in a frenzied, horrid song.

(And like a girl she feels guilty for not drinking all of her milk when her mother told her to.)

Everything breaks until there is only her heart left; hot and small and beating, a tangle of blue and red veins that weep and scream at the injustice of it all. And suddenly, as suddenly as they appeared the horses vanish, and in their place stands Klaus.

He stands before her like Death, like a gentleman, staring at her and somehow managing to seem both disgusted and amused by her state. Slowly he bends over and reaches out, gingerly stroking her mangled frame with his fingers, caressing the mess of a girl beaten into the ground. And she can't help but lie still and watch, speechless, spineless.

She lies still, playing the part of a limpid saint, praying to a God she no longer believes in while he brings his hands to the flesh of her neck, watching her with such bored fascination. She dares to hope; she waits for oblivion.

And then oblivion apologizes, because she won't be able to make it.

Because he doesn't put her out of her misery like a benevolent devil. He doesn't dramatically plunge his fans into her throat as the crescendo swells and the audience claps and dabs their eyes with rosy tissues – no, no, instead, he keeps her. Watches her like a sick experiment. He lets her grow wings, thin and frail things, only so that he may clip them later with careful, scissor words.

A caged little girl.

A queen; a queen of smoke and dead flowers and melted gold and drugs that make you light-headed and blood dripping from your lips and holes in your heart and foggy glass and weeping mothers and rapists and trapped butterflies and precious baby girls.

A queen, fit for a king.

III.

There was once this boy.

He had the bright blue eyes and sun-gold hair of a child, though he was no longer a child. He had two beautiful ancient parents that seldom visited his hollow crib. He thought that maybe it was because they didn't want to have to hear his cries when he had nightmares of his father devouring him, of black bleeding wolves, of sharp dog's fangs and grinning blades sinking into flesh.

Klaus finds that Caroline has those blood-sucking baby doll eyes that make him do stupid things. That make him feel stupid. She seems so scared of him. He would build her a tower of stone and tile and silver, if that would make her feel safer.

He hears her screaming in her sleep, a bleeding, tarnished song echoing the terrors of her heart. Her sharp blue diamond eyes shining, crying, red and puffy. Judging him, fearing him, hating him for being so demented.

Waiting for him to tilt back her head, expose her white neck like a swan's and sink his teeth into her flesh, mar and tear and destroy her pale perfection, her once bright life.

Because he was a boy born for death. Because he grew into a man born for blood.

IV.

Caroline can't sleep; not when it is so quiet, not when she is used to hearing life around her.

She sits on the cold marble floor, listening to nothingness, and she starts singing a bird song to herself. One about innocent, golden baby birds who fall from their nests and are snatched up dark feathered hawks with blood red eyes.

She used to read fairytales and believe every word. For that reason at first she

thought a knight in white platinum armor would find her and his touch would bring her to life again, would take her above ground and back among the living and the mortal hearts. Then they would fall in love. Kiss. Get married. End scene, curtain fall, everyone applauds.

Things are different now. She knows people aren't good or bad. People just have to make a lot of confusing choices with terribly complicated results.

She knows something is different inside of *her*. She has vomited out that weakness that always loomed behind her heart, making it shake like a leaf in the winter breeze. She has transformed. And transformation is a powerful thing – like Klaus himself turning his face, blue eyes transforming into black-red.

She had been frightened of him. He had acted oh so godly on his black throne.

But she is alive, and she is breathing. She is a daughter of fruit and flowers and sea, fed with barley and kissed by the sun. She has blood, thick and red and powerful beating loudly behind her ears.

Why be afraid? Maybe he's nothing but a lost little wolf boy.

V.

You know, girls have probably died for worse.

She doesn't understand the way silence can wreck you. The way eyes can break you and make you covered with bubbling red blisters. It would make her laugh, surely, if it was happening to someone else.

His skin looks pale in the candlelight and her lip tastes like salty iron as she watches him, as if everything she's not saying is clawing its way out of her mouth, making her bleed.

It's when you want to say something so badly, so desperately, that you can't and you remain there, frozen. It's the way eyes can suddenly draw you in, until you can't look away – addictive, narcotic vampire eyes.

Oh, she would find it funny if it was happening to someone else.

But it isn't. It's happening to her and she stands, ten steps away from him, trying to get the words out of her mouth.

Before she says anything he tells her he loves her, and she knows he's telling the

truth and she doesn't know why. She wonders what happened to him so that he now has thorns in his eyes. Like a little wolf-vampire boy.

And suddenly for some reason she doesn't want to break his sad, fevered, blood-sucking, mad, lovelorn heart. But it's too late. The words burst from her mouth like canaries. (Girls have died for worse.)

"My mother has discovered a way to take me above ground again. Tomorrow she and my friends will arrive to take me. I will go."

VI.

The day comes slowly. But when it does, it's like a gale of warm air.

She twitches all day with anticipation, it feels as though her skin is about to crack and she has to fight to hold it steady. They don't mention what day and month it is, but he does seem to stare at her more than ever.

When he takes her to the gate, that's when she sees her mother, her friends, standing all there.

They are a wheel of colors. Their cheeks are flushed the shade of French roses, their hair casting yellow shadows on their faces, and they're standing there bathed in *light, finally*, among flowers and trees and under a clear blue sky.

Almost like Gods.

She runs to them and they scream and hug and kiss. Her mother smells like apples and wheat, Elena smells like roses, Bonnie smells like ocean and cinnamon, and all their men smell like mint and cypresses and cherries and freshly baked bread. They are all laughing and crying and talking about everything and nothing. Trying to feel like she never left. To see them so bright and beautiful almost makes her weep.

But then, she remembers him behind her. And what is she to say, an introduction? Introduce her family and friends to her kidnapper? She turns just slightly, as if to say something to him, to wave farewell. But then, he isn't behind her anymore. He's gone, like he was never there.

She is almost angry that he didn't say goodbye, but she stops herself before it gets that far.

VII.

She is gone.

This is the only thought in his mind. She is gone and he is left to stalk his own empty kingdom as if she were never there. As if she never existed to torment his every waking moment. His every sleeping moment.

But hadn't he expected that she would leave the first chance she got?

The truth is, he hadn't expected much from a girl who smelled like flowers and vanilla and salt, who had hair spun from sun and gold and had a laugh like a bird taking flight.

And she was different from what he'd imagined her to be; she wasn't quite so terribly fragile. She was stubborn and spoiled and bratty and completely incorrigible.

He liked that.

It had been just like catching bugs. As a boy he had always tried to keep them, he used to put them safely in a jar. And they died. They always died.

He pushes everything away, and just like when he was a little boy hunting bugs, he hides himself away in the darkest corners of his false-god kingdom.

VIII.

Summers end, just like all beautiful things. Like most natural things. And now matter how much Caroline laughs and sings and dances and braids wildflowers in her hair, it ends.

And when the leaves turn red and then brown and become colorless ashes in the mud and the rain begins to fall like sheets of silver knives, Caroline remembers the pact that has been made. And as the prospect of returning to Klaus looms above her, she doesn't understand why this has happened. And why did he leave without even saying goodbye, at least pretend they were civilized individuals? And would he be furious when she returned? Would he hate her?

Questions, questions, questions.

But, she thought, he had never really been angry towards her. She had seen him furious, yes – but never towards her.

Her mother tries to convince her to escape, to try and run away where he will never find her. She talks about how splendid it will be, to spend the whole year together

again, to feel warmth and sunshine all year round. But Caroline says that there is simply no running away from Klaus. He always knows where she is, this she knows.

She wears a white frothy dress that makes her feel like a fairy, and wears pale flowers in her hair like when she was younger.

"Caroline," he says when they meet again, as if he is rendered dumb by her presence.

"Klaus," she replies, just as simply.

Something has changed – and they don't know exactly what, and neither will speak of it. Best not scare it off, after all. And, walking back through the looming gate, they try to speak to each other properly. Now matter how difficult it is. Now matter how much it still hurts.

There was once this blue-eyed girl. She gave a blue-eyed dead man life.

She doesn't mind being his so much anymore. She has gotten used to the way marble feels under her bare feet. Now it's almost like sand. And she supposes it is nice, the way he moves mountains, the way he crosses sea and sky for her.

Caroline knows that people will tell stories about them. They'll tell it to others around bonfires, at night before bedtime, at the dinner table to the guests, and the way things are will no doubt be changed along the way. Little things, maybe. Or maybe big things. But you can't always care what people will think of it.

He isn't quite so distant as before. He seems to have more substance, more life, he feels more real. His hair is gold now instead of gilded, his eyes don't turn black and red quite so often, his skin doesn't look pale in the candlelight.

Her wolf-vampire prince.

He tells her how white light contains all the other colors, and that black is the absence of color. Some people say, he tells her, that this is why they aren't real colors. And then he says that absence and fullness are, at the end of the day, the exact same things.

And Caroline realizes, that they glow. Like everlasting poison gas stars. They exist as the bane and lifeblood of each other.

Caroline realizes, that there is hope to their story after all.

